

Part B State Annual Performance Report (APR) for 2007

Overview of the Annual Performance Report Development:

The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) first compiled and analyzed data for the development of the Annual Performance Report (APR)/State Performance Plan (SPP) utilizing the expertise of internal personnel. A draft along with the data was reviewed with the Rhode Island Special Education Advisory Committee (RISEAC). RISEAC advises the Commissioner and Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education on matters concerning: (a) the unmet educational needs of children with disabilities; (b) comments publicly on any rules or regulations proposed by the State regarding the education of children with disabilities; (c) advises the Rhode Island Department of Education in developing evaluations and reporting on data to the Secretary under section 618 of the IDEA; (d) advises the RIDE in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in Federal Monitoring Reports under Part B of the IDEA; and (e) advises the RIDE in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities. Membership of the committee is composed of individuals involved in or concerned with the education of children with disabilities. Parents of children with disabilities birth through 26 maintain the majority of the Committee Membership. The Membership also includes individuals with disabilities, teachers, representatives of institutions of higher education, private schools, charter schools, state and local education officials, administrators of programs for children with disabilities foster care and homelessness, vocational, community or business organizations, juvenile and adult corrections and State Child Serving Agencies. The SEAC reviewed the draft and provided suggestions and input. These were incorporated into the final copy of this document.

Overview of the Annual Performance Report (APR) for Indicator 14:

Collecting the Data on Student Outcomes

The RIDE Office for Diverse Learners has concluded two years of secondary transition outcome data collection. This year the agency benefited from the assistance of the National Post-School Outcome Center (NPSO) through conference calls, participation in the regional data assistance meeting, ongoing technical assistance and utilization of the NPSO tools (note: data reports and tables in the APR were developed with NPSO tools). The following is a summary of key features in the Rhode Island Outcome Data Collection System.

- Rhode Island is using a census approach for conducting the data collection.
- All students have a common student identifier administered by RIDE. This identifier is used to target the survey population of school leavers including graduates, students who age out of eligibility (21 years old), and those that drop out. Each district is provided with a list of the leavers they reported in the previous school year special education census. Each leavers identifier is linked to an on-line survey for district personnel to complete.
- Rhode Island uses the NPSO survey protocol for collecting data (Tier 1: minimum questions).
- Rhode Island targeted the students last known case manager (certified special education teacher) to contact the student and complete the survey.
- Rhode Island uses the Rehabilitation Act definition of competitive employment in the instructions for the survey.
- Rhode Island has uses the following script in the outcome survey for defining full-time enrollment in post-secondary education:

Since fulltime/part-time enrollment is determined by each training program and/or college, please answer this question based on the student's knowledge of what constitutes full or part-time status. If the student needs a prompt, colleges typically require 12-18 credits for full-time enrollment, however, some students with disabilities may take a reduced course load and remain in full-time status.

This is the second year that Local Education Agencies (LEA) have collected and reported data for indicator 14. Regional meetings are offered annually in the spring for LEA Census Clerks and Special Education Administrators to review the administration of the outcome data collection. The typical content for these meetings includes:

- A review of all protocols and tools (survey form, tracking response rates, etc.).
- The identification of a point person within the district for the data collection. The point person has access to the list of school leavers, can assign surveys to specific school personnel for completion and can track the completion of the surveys for their district.
- Recommendations to collect additional student contact information on students exiting at the end of the school year including cell phone number, email address, etc. RIDE has installed fields in the special education census for this information and it has been incorporated into the new state IEP form (effective July 1, 2008).
- Districts are encouraged to notify students that their case manager will contact them in the spring after school exit and RIDE provides a sample letter for this purpose.

Although the majority of the districts utilized the students' case manager to make student contact, several districts assigned the responsibility to central office administrators due to labor resistance or the supervision issues in administrating the survey. The survey period is from early April to mid-May each year. RIDE has found that a controlled window of approximately six weeks allows districts enough time to conduct the data collection and provides sufficient pressure to meet deadlines.

Monitoring Priority: Effective General Supervision Part B / Effective Transition

Indicator 14. –: Percent of youth who had IEPs, are no longer in secondary school and who have been competitively employed, enrolled in some type of postsecondary school, or both, within one year of leaving high school.(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(B))

Measurement: Percent = [(# of youth who had IEPs, are no longer in secondary school and who have been competitively employed, enrolled in some type of postsecondary school, or both, within one year of leaving high school) divided by the (# of youth assessed who had IEPs and are no longer in secondary school)] times 100.

FFY	Measurable and Rigorous Target
2006 (2006-2007)	72.88% of youth who had IEPs, are no longer in secondary school and who have been competitively employed, enrolled in some type of postsecondary school, or both, within one year of leaving high school
2007 (2007-2008)	73.88% of youth who had IEPs, are no longer in secondary school and who have been competitively employed, enrolled in some type of postsecondary school, or both, within one year of leaving high school
2008	74.88% of youth who had IEPs, are no longer in secondary school and who

(2008-2009)	have been competitively employed, enrolled in some type of postsecondary school, or both, within one year of leaving high school
2009 (2009-2010)	75.88% of youth who had IEPs, are no longer in secondary school and who have been competitively employed, enrolled in some type of postsecondary school, or both, within one year of leaving high school
2010 (2010-2011)	76.88% of youth who had IEPs, are no longer in secondary school and who have been competitively employed, enrolled in some type of postsecondary school, or both, within one year of leaving high school

Actual Target Data for 2007:

Rhode Island had 1,939 students reported as school leavers (graduated, aged out of eligibility or dropped out). Of this group, Rhode Island school districts were able to reach 989 of these students for a 51% response rate. Of the 989 students who responded, 782 reported being competitively employed, enrolled in some type of postsecondary school, or both within one year after leaving school.

Rhode Island obtained an overall meaningful engagement rate of 79% exceeding the measurable and rigorous target of 72.88%. The baseline engagement rate for the 2006 APR was 71.88%.

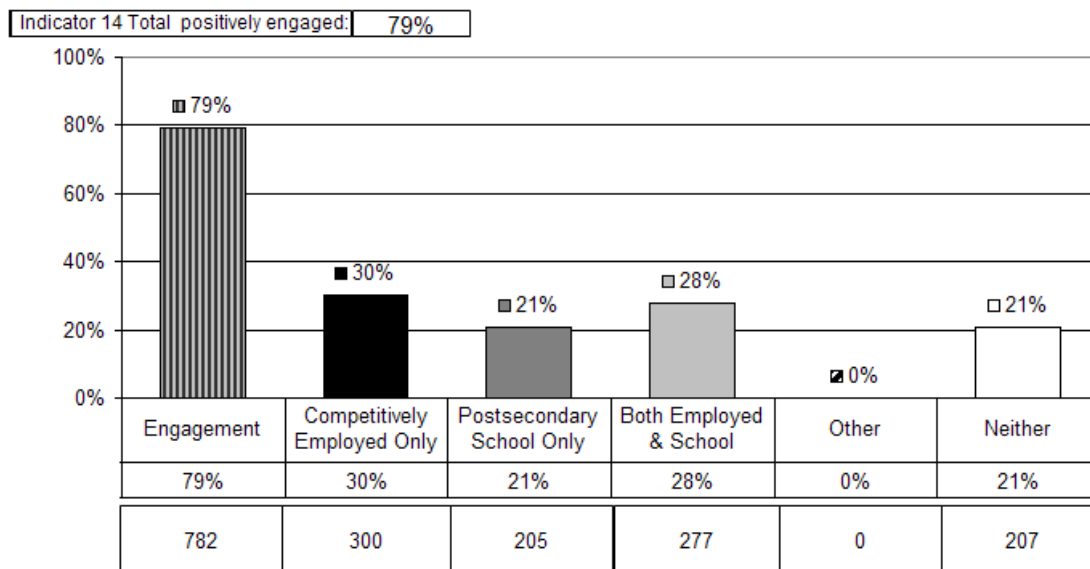
Measurement

$$\% = \frac{\text{\# of youth who had IEPs, are no longer in secondary school and who have been competitively employed, enrolled in some type of postsecondary school, or both, within one year of leaving high school}}{\text{\# of youth assessed who had IEPs and are no longer in secondary school}} \times 100$$

Calculation

$$79.06\% = \frac{782}{989} \times 100$$

Table 3: Rhode Island 2006-07 Meaningfully Engaged Respondent Data



Discussion of Improvement Activities Completed and Explanation of Progress or Slippage that occurred for 2007:

RIDE provided a comprehensive report; the Rhode Island Secondary Transition Outcome Data Report 2006-07 presented in Appendix I-14A. A summary of the information in that report appears here.

The respondent rates for different demographic groups appear in table 1.

Table 1: Response Rate by Demographic

Targeted Groups	Total Leavers*	Response Totals	Response Rates
Overall	1939	989	51%
Students w/ Learning Disabilities	957	498	52%
Students w/ Emotional Disturbance	364	160	44%
Students w/ Mental Retardation	91	48	53%
Students w/ all other disabilities	527	283	54%
Female	696	368	53%

Minority	477	228	48%
Dropout	480	163	34%

* special education students who graduated, aged out of eligibility or dropped out of school.

RIDE has been primarily focused on building the capacity of the data collection system in the first two years of collecting indicator 14 data. With the introduction of new instruments by NPSO and improved strategies implemented by RIDE, the state increased response rates and was able to begin analyzing representativeness and providing LEAs with district level reports. These developments are improving the fidelity of the data collected and the utility of the results.

RIDE improved from a 46% response rate in 2006 to a 51% response rate in 2007.

In the Rhode Island outcome data, all sub groups were adequately represented (based on models recommended by NPSO) except for students who dropped out of school (see table 2). With a negative 8.27% difference, the representativeness of dropouts in the data warrants improvement.

Table 2: Representativeness in Rhode Island Transition Outcome Data

Targeted Groups	Targeted Leavers Representation	Respondent Representation	Difference
Students w/ Learning Disabilities	49.36%	50.35%	1.00%
Students w/ Emotional Disturbance	18.77%	16.18%	- 2.59%
Students w/ Mental Retardation	4.69%	4.85%	0.16%
Students w/ all other disabilities	27.18%	28.61%	1.44%
Female	35.89%	37.21%	1.31%
Minority	24.60%	23.05%	- 1.55%
Dropout	24.76%	16.48%	- 8.27%

RIDE provided further analysis of the outcome data in the Rhode Island Secondary Transition Outcome Data Report 2006-07 in Appendix I-14A. Analysis included examination of the various groups in the study by gender, ethnicity, disability, exit credential, etc. The following conclusions were presented in the report.

- 1. In order for policy makers, school district leaders and others to draw strong conclusions from the data, RIDE must continue to work with the LEAs in reaching students who have dropped out of school to increase the representation of dropouts in the data.*

2. *RIDE must continue to work with the national technical assistance providers and LEAs to improve the quality of the data collected. Issues of respondent self reporting accuracy, interviewer interpretation of responses and clarity of the definition of terms used in the survey warrant ongoing examination and, if necessary, improvement.*
3. *For those students who exited public education in 2006-07, Rhode Island has a 79% state engagement rate. Subsequent years of data will be necessary to validate the engagement rate as reliable.*
4. *The implications of student exit credentials (data from table 5) on student outcomes are an area that warrants further examination. If there is a connection between students receiving a credential other than a diploma and achieving an improved probability of meaningful engagement, examination of this practice could be of interest particularly with the implementation of the RI Proficiency Based Diploma and alternative credentials.*
5. *The numbers of students who report not being meaningfully engaged is of concern. Particularly for those below the state averages; including Hispanic, African American and Native American students and students with emotional disturbance and mental retardation. Further analysis of the data and subsequent studies of these groups of students will be important for educational leaders and advocates in designing responses to meet the needs of these populations. Further, continued refinement of the survey instruments may allow for specific questions targeted for these groups to better understand the barriers to meaningful engagement.*

With the tools now available for the analysis of the transition outcome data, RIDE and LEAs will have access to information that will aid in examining the effectiveness of programs and interventions on student outcomes. The most important activity in the collection and reporting of indicator 14 data is the influence the data will have on programming and intervention decisions at the school and district level.

In conclusion RIDE has experienced progress in building the transition data collection system. Data collection response rates increased from the 2006 APR. Rhode Island exceeded the measurable and rigorous target. The state now has the capacity to analyze the data related to different demographic groups and LEA/district level data.

The Rhode Island Secondary Transition Outcome Data Report 2006-07 was sent to each LEA Superintendent and Special Education Director in January 2008 with individual district level data. The accompanying letter appears in Appendix I-14B. RIDE has scheduled a series of regional meetings to review the state and district level data. The results will be presented to the Rhode Island Transition Council at the February, 2009 meeting.

Revisions, with Justification, to Proposed Targets / Improvement Activities / Timelines / Resources for 2007:

2007 Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources	Status
1. Development of data analysis and public reporting	Summer 2007	RIDE Contract or Request for Proposal. RIDE personnel.	<u>Complete</u> RIDE offered a request for proposals and did not receive a successful application. With the availability of the NPSO tools RIDE was able to internalize this activity and the final report appears in Appendix I-14A.

2. Develop capacity to cross reference student outcome data with the RI Adult Education (CALIS) system *	Summer 2007	RIDE personnel.	<u>Complete</u> This task was undertaken by the RIDE Office of Networks & Information systems as part of the cohort graduation/dropout calculations and was included in the revised figures for indicators 1 & 2 in the April 2008 APR Revision.
3. Refine data collection system and public reporting	Fall 2007	RIDE personnel and contracted partners (as appropriate).	<u>Complete</u> See item 1.
2008 Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources	Status
4. Development of data analysis and public reporting – finalize vendor contract and implement	Winter 2008	RIDE Contract or Request for Proposal. RIDE personnel.	<u>Complete</u> See item 1.
5. Continue improvements in data collection and participation of districts reporting	Winter/Spring 2008	RIDE personnel	<u>Continued</u> Final report disseminated 12/08. Public reporting presentations scheduled through spring of 2008. District survey training begins 3/08 with survey period April to mid-May 2008.
2009 Improvement Activities	Timelines	Resources	Status
6. Identify strategies for reaching dropouts in the data collection and share with LEAs.	Winter/Spring 2008	RIDE staff	
7. Seek partners to research the higher than state average non-engagement rates for particular groups.	Spring/Summer 2008	RIDE staff and identified partners	

<p>8. Continue development of transition related strategies in the implementation of the RI High School reform effort and Proficiency Based Diploma to address beneficial credentialing options, (also see indicators 1 & 2).</p>	<p>2008 - ongoing</p>	<p>RIDE staff, High School Reform Fellows, LEAs</p>	
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